

NATIONAL FOREIGN ASSESSMENT CENTER

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

DD/A Registry
81-1162/2

Director

1 JUN 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Administration

SUBJECT : Consolidation of Agency Graphics Facilities

1. The issue of consolidating Agency graphics activities has been discussed by various echelons of management as far back as 1952. Cogent arguments can be made on both sides of this issue. Any decision should be supportive of our basic mission--to produce finished intelligence. I think most would agree that the Agency's primary use of graphics is in the analysis of raw information and its synthesis in finished intelligence. It is not surprising, therefore, that NPIC and OGSR have the largest graphics components in the Agency. In this context, I can only speak to the OGSR case.

2. The Cartographic Division of OGSR* is an integral part of our intelligence production capability. The Cartographic Division's pioneering of computer-charted maps and graphics provides a level of expertise in that unit which exceeds that of any other component in the Agency. It was created to support all of our analytic elements. It is an added benefit that it sometimes meets non-NFAC needs.

25X1 *There are ☐ people managing and preparing graphics and maps for intelligence production.

we believe

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3. The graphics designers have moved significantly beyond conventional artist/illustrator graphics production to substantive analysis of highly complex political, economic, technical and strategic data and concepts for visual interpretation. They have developed substantive areas and functional expertise, and many of their products can stand alone as finished intelligence. Because of this change in mission and capability, in August of 1969 all artists and illustrators were reclassified as Visual Information Specialists.

4. NFAC's graphics capabilities are intimately tied to our production of finished intelligence, either through the creation of briefing aids or graphics for publications. The designers are NFAC careerists who have a strong sense of mission and provide NFAC the flexibility to produce on extremely short notice graphics of the highest quality. I cannot accept having that capability diminished in any way.

5. The fact that the Agency's graphics facilities remain tied to the components they are serving seems to make eminently good sense. Most of the shops have clearly defined missions, a specific clientele, and specialize in a particular kind of product. If decentralization fosters professional isolation and career stagnation in very small shops of 3 or 4 persons, perhaps some of those should be consolidated.

6. On balance, I believe, as did my predecessors on this issue, that centrally managed services tend to become self-serving and to create internally generated work, often at the expense of flexibility and responsiveness to specialized needs of customers. I cannot afford to let that happen. NFAC must continue to exercise leadership in graphics design through its briefing aids and publications. Our mission is the communication of information. Graphics are an essential element of that equation.

7. All portions of this memorandum are classified

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John McMahon

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